



The Spectacle

From the Office Down the Hall

In 150 years, I suspect no one will remember Paula Radcliffe. Arguably, in only four years she may already be relegated to little more than an Olympic footnote: the woman that *almost* won gold for Brittan in 2004. This is especially tragic because she held such promise, such potential. As Brando once said, “I could have been a contender.”

Paula was the women’s marathon world record holder and the favorite to win this year in Greece. Yet only a few miles from the finish, she sat and began sobbing, leaving a stadium full of very disappointed people holding limp Union Jacks. In an AP story, she said, “I just don’t have a reason...I just felt like I couldn’t keep going.” Paula should have won gold, but did not even get to test the heft of bronze.

The Olympics are an inherently patriotic event and, on opening night as I watched nations proudly waiving their colors in a spirit of cooperation and fierce friendliness, I began to think about George Washington Parke Custis. Custis had one foot in a classical education (okay, at least a few toes) and both feet firmly planted on American soil—he was nothing if not the epitome of a patriot. I think the Olympics would have suited him just fine (especially if there was a sheep sheering event). What’s more, in his 1826 Fourth of July speech, Custis admonished a crowd at Arlington Spring to send more aid to the embattled Greeks. If he could have survived another 40 years, he probably would have loved to have gone to Greece to wave an American flag at the first modern Olympics in 1896. But if posterity were made into an Olympic event, I wonder how well he would do?



West side of Arlington House

Like Paula, Custis was poised for gold. He had George Washington for a coach and the advantages of money and position to help him achieve his considerable potential. Yet in 1798, the Reverend John McDowell at St. John’s College in Annapolis wrote George Washington concerning his ward, young master Custis: “Mr. Custis possesses competent talents...but they are counteracted by an indolence of mind which renders it difficult to draw them into action...” This after having been expelled from the College of New Jersey at Princeton only the year before. Then as a teenager (and old enough to participate in the modern Olympics) Custis joined the militia and was even promoted to the brevet rank of major. But Washington’s comments suggest he was more interested in the uniform than combat

and, after seeing no action, his unit was disbanded. However Custis continued his efforts at public service. In 1802 he made an attempt at following his mentor into politics when he ran for the General Assembly—and then lost with only 20% of the vote. In 1814 he got another chance at the militia, but was turned down for a commission, so he joined the rank and file to fend off the advancing Redcoats...and the British burned the Capitol.

Now it must be said that Custis was a persistent man and was undaunted by these setbacks. In fact, it was the gun manned by Custis that fired the last defensive shot in 1814 (before everyone went home; Custis watched

(continued on page 6)

Area Special Events

September 3-6

Stonewall Jackson Heritage Arts & Crafts Jubilee, includes Civil War camps and demonstrations at the Jackson's Mill Historic Area, off Route 19 near Weston, WV. 304-269-5100 or www.jacksonsmill.com.

September 4

Washington DC Bus tour, "Behind the Scenes of Lincoln's Assassination," covers less familiar sites in the city. A Smithsonian Associates tour. Leaves 8:45 am from the corner of Fourth and Independence Avenue. \$130. www.residentassociates.org/rap or 202-357-3030.

Walking tour with living history: Meet spies soldiers, actors and other "citizens" of Washington, DC and decode a spy message during "Courage! The Civil War in Washington" walking tour. Begins 11 am at Cosi Coffee, 10th and E streets NW. Mention you saw it here for ticket discounts. \$12 adult, \$6 under 12 (after discount). 301-588-9255 or mail@historicstrolls.com.

Civil War living history lantern tours at Meadow Farm Park just north of Richmond, VA off I-295. Tours leave every 15 minutes 7:15-9 pm. Free. Registration required, call 804-501-5520.

September 4-5

Living history encampment and demonstrations by CSA artillery at Pitzer Woods in the Gettysburg National Military Park, PA. www.nps.gov/gett or 717-334-1124 extension 422.

September 5

Living history artillery demonstration at Fort Washington Park, MD near Washington DC at 1, 2 and 3 pm. Free with park admission. www.nps.gov/fowa or 301-763-4600.

Walking tour, "Death of a Brigade," mile hike between Fox's and Turner's Gaps on South Mountain near Boonsboro, MD. Begins at 2 pm at Turner's Gap. Free. 301-432-8065.

Living history, emphasis is on civilian and

military life during the Civil War at Meadow Farm Park, just north of Richmond, VA off I-295. Noon-4 pm. Free. 804-501-5520.

September 7

Lecture, "Reconsidering the Evidence: The Road to Special Order 191, September 1862." Where were the "Lost Orders" found? At the Greenbrier MD State Park Visitor Center. 7 pm. Free. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

September 8

Lecture, "Field Hospitals at Burkittsville," Gathland State Park near Burkittsville, MD. 7 pm. Free. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

September 9

Lecture, "Iron Brigade at South Mountain." (MD) Who was really the first Iron Brigade? At the Greenbrier State Park Visitor Center. 7 pm Free. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

September 10

Special program, "The Role of Children in the Civil War," exhibit opening reception at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, PA. Details: 866-258-4729 or www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org.

September 11

Seminar, "Drawing Fire: Surveying & Map Making in the Civil War," sponsored in part by the Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation in Beverly, WV. Registration, details: 304-637-RICH or email richmt@richmountain.org.

September 9-11

Living history encampment and demonstrations by Virginia soldiers in Pitzer Woods and CSA artillery at the Pennsylvania Memorial in the Gettysburg National Military Park. www.nps.gov/gett or 717-334-1124 extension 422.

September 11-12

Living history, "The Siege and Capture of Harpers Ferry 1862," at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, WV. Free with admission. www.nps.gov/hafe or 304-535-6298.



Living history and reenactment of the Battle of Crampton's Gap (South Mountain) near Burkittsville, MD. Details: www.burkittsville1862.com.

Civil War Days at the Chesapeake Public Library, VA. Living history, demonstrations, lectures, kids' activities and much more offered at this popular annual event. 757-382-8571 or www.chesapeake.lib.va.us.

Living history, "What's Cooking," 19th-century cooking techniques at Endview Plantation in Newport News, VA. Free with admission. 757-887-1862 or www.endview.org.

September 12

Flag placing ceremony, first-ever event at the Antietam National Cemetery, MD placing flags over the graves of soldiers known killed at South Mountain. Begins at 9 am. Volunteers welcome. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

Guided tour of the site of a Confederate Civil War camp and a freedman's farm on President James Madison's estate, Montpelier, near Orange, VA. Estate was used during the winter of 1863-64 by South Carolina troops. 2 pm. Free with admission (\$11 adults). 540-672-2728 or www.montpelier.org.

September 13

Lecture, "The Battle, or Battles, of South Mountain," at Gathland State Park near Burkittsville, MD. 7 pm. Free. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

September 14

Lecture, "The Battle of South Mountain in the Context of the Civil War," at the

Area Special Events (continued)

Greenbrier State Park Visitor Center, MD. 7 pm. Free. 301-432-8065 or www.fosmb.org.

September 16

"The CSS Hunley: Recovered and Raised," the story of the Confederate submarine in Charleston Harbor. Talk at the USS Constellation in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, MD. 7 pm. \$12 at door, \$10 advance. 410-539-1797 or www.constellation.org

September 17-19

Anniversary activities at the Antietam National Battlefield, MD. Details: www.nps.gov/anti or 304-535-6298.

Civil War Weekend commemorating the Third Battle of Winchester. Living history, tours, lectures and more at various sites in Winchester, VA. 888-689-4545. www.ShenandoahatWar.org.

September 18-19

Living history encampment and demonstrations by US Cavalry at the Pennsylvania Memorial in the Gettysburg

National Military Park, PA. 717-334-1124 extension 422 or www.nps.gov/gett.

Living history, "Harvest Fair," 1800s plantation-style commemoration of the season with storytelling, dance and much more at Pamplin Historical Park near Petersburg, VA. Free with admission. www.pamplinpark.org or 877-PAMPLIN.

Special anniversary weekend, "The Potomac River Blockade: The Fight at Freestone Point Civil War Battery," at Leesylvania State Park, Woodbridge, VA. Recreates 1861 event. Living history, demonstrations, special tours. 10 am-4 pm. \$4 per carload. 703-583-6904 or email visitorcenter@erols.com.

September 23

Lecture, "Reflections on the Civil War Centennial," by Dr. James. I "Bud" Robertson Jr. at the University of Richmond's Keller Hall in Richmond, VA. Reservations: Call the Museum of the Confederacy at 804-649-1861 extension 10. See www.moc.org for details.

September 25

Bus tour, "Culpeper and Cedar Mountain," sponsored by the Friends of Fort Ward. Leaves 8 am from Fort Ward in Alexandria, VA. \$85. Reservations by Sept. 18. 703-838-4848 or www.fortward.org.

Living history, event commemorates the hanging of Mosby men in Front Royal in 1864. At the Mosby Monument in Prospect Hill Cemetery, VA. Period music, speaker. Free. www.ci.front-royal.va.us or 800-338-2576.

September 25-26

Living history, "Gray Thunder on the Hill" artillery demonstrations at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, PA. 10 am-4 pm Saturday, noon-4 pm Sunday. 866-258-4729 or www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org.

Living history encampment and demonstrations by Pennsylvania hospital unit at Spangler Spring and CSA artillery at Pitzer Woods in the Gettysburg National Military Park, PA. www.nps.gov/gett or 717-334-1124 extension 422.

Living history, "Give Us Our Daily Bread," life on the Civil War home front at Washington Monument State Park (South Mountain) near Boonsboro, MD. Details: 301-432-8065.

Living history, anniversary program at Fort Harrison, part of the Richmond National Battlefield Park, VA. Walking tours and demonstrations. 10 am-5 pm Saturday; 10 am-4 pm Sunday. Candlelight program 8 pm Saturday. Free. 804-226-1981 or www.nps.gov/rich.

September 26

Lecture, "From Triumph to Tragedy: 1863 - The Most Memorable Year in the Life of General William Henry Fitzhugh (Rooney) Lee," at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station, just off US 29 north of Culpeper, VA. 2 pm. \$5 donation. 540-727-7718.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Arlington House was the home of Robert E. Lee and his family for thirty years and is uniquely associated with the Washington and Custis families. It is now preserved as a memorial to General Lee, who gained the respect of Americans in both the North and the South.

Arlington House
The Robert E. Lee Memorial
c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Phone
703-235-1530

Web Site
<http://www.nps.gov/arho>

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please contact Delphine Gross no later than the 20th of each month with availability dates and times to be posted the following month (Please call by September 20th with October information). Even if you are a regularly scheduled VIP please contact Delphine to confirm your availability. Again, the contact number is (703) 235-1530 ext. 227. Please leave the dates and times you are available on the voice mail. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Significant Historic Events in September

September, 1845

G.W.P. Custis, continues his “pilgrimage to the great scenes of the American Revolution, visiting Boston, Lexington, and Concord. In Boston he was “depressed to find no sign of the old entrenchments on Bunker Hill,” and later expressed his regret that the New England states had not preserved some of the Revolutionary battle sites for future generations. In Lexington and Concord he found things “as they should be, little changed from the olden days.” “In advocating the preservation of historic sites...Custis was once more well ahead of this time.”

September, 1851

G.W.P. Custis spent a few days visiting the Lees in Baltimore, and while there addressed a meeting in Monument Square “which had been called to petition the government to intercede in behalf of some Irish nationalist confined in the England penal colony in Australia. Lee was impressed...by the size of the crowd and the attention and applause it gave ‘the old orator of Ireland,’ when Mr. Custis addressed it.”

September, 1866

The vault of The Unknown Dead of the Civil War, a pit twenty feet deep and twenty feet in diameter constructed just to the west of the former flower garden at Arlington, was filled with bones from over two thousand skeletons—“skulls in one division, legs in another, arms in another, and ribs in another”—and finally sealed.

September 1, 1852

Colonel Lee assumed command of the United States Military Academy at West Point where he served until March 31, 1855.

September 1, 1862

Battle of Chantilly. During this last episode of Second Manassas, General Pope’s troops held off a Confederate advance and withdrew closer to Washington. “Lee kept the pressure on the distraught Federals, but Washington itself was well protected.”

Perhaps the greatest consequence of the battle was the death of General Phillip Kearny, one of the “most promising Union officers...The death of the beloved and admired Kearny...was mourned both North and South.” Kearny’s grave and equestrian statue are located near the Old Amphitheater.

September 2, 1862

After defeating the United States forces at Second Manassas, Lee remained on the offensive, crossing the Potomac into Maryland by fords in the Leesburg area, an operation which continued until September 7.

September 8, 1862

General Lee issued a proclamation to the citizen of Maryland declaring that it “is for you to decide your destiny freely and without constraint. This army will respect your choice, whatever it may be.”

September 11, 1861

The Cheat Mountain campaign, the first that Lee was to conduct, was a failure, and it brought Lee considerable public criticism. For five days he campaigned “against the Federals, the heavy rains of the season, and the rugged mountains in western Virginia.” [Long] Afterwards the Richmond press pictured Lee as overcautious theorist and gave him a lecture about the proper conduct of mountain warfare.

September 13, 1861

Lt. Colonel John A. Washington, Lee’s A.D.C. during the Cheat Mountain fiasco, was killed by United States Army pickets while reconnoitering. The horse of Rooney Lee was killed at the same time, but Lee’s son was himself uninjured. Washington, who was the great-grand nephew of George Washington and the last private owner of Mount Vernon, had been esteemed by Lee as both a friend and a gentleman. To his wife, Lee wrote with genuine grief that he had appreciated “him very highly. Morning & evening have I seen him on his knees

praying to his Maker... ‘[T]he righteous is taken away for the evil to come.’ [Isaiah 57:1] May God have mercy on us all.”

September 13, 1862

In the morning at Frederick, Maryland, two lounging Union soldiers picked up a paper wrapped around a few cigars. It was a lost of Lee’s orders for the Maryland campaign. The ‘Lost Order of Antietam’ was rushed to McClellan and he began to move accordingly and a little more rapidly, though not entirely trusting to his fortuitous intelligence.

September 16, 1832

George Washington Custis Lee, first child of Robert E. and Mary Custis Lee was born at Old Point (Fort Monroe), Norfolk, Virginia, the only one of the Lee children not born at Arlington. Six weeks later Lee wrote, “Master Custis is the most darling boy in the world.”

September 17, 1862

The Battle of Antietam was probably the bloodiest one-day battle ever fought in North America. “Badly outnumbered, Lee made his stand in Maryland and McClellan attacked, throwing in his corps piecemeal and failing to use his very strong reserve...Federal gains were small and costly.” At a critical moment when the Confederate right was driven in, Confederate General A. P. Hill and his division arrived on the field after a hurried march from Harper’s Ferry, and the Federal advance was halted. Exact casualty figures are unknown, but at least 12,400 Federals and 13,700 Confederates were killed, wounded or listed as missing in battle.

“Lee, directing his first battle on the field (in contrast to planning the strategy and relinquishing the tactics to subordinates), revealed himself to be as great a combat general as he had already shown himself a strategist. It was entirely his fight, as he moved brigade units and even gun batteries about with no regard to army organization.”

Significant Historic Events in August (continued)

“His men stood up to 25 per cent casualties...and permanently cooled off McCellan’s battle ardor.” Nevertheless, Lee’s best chance of winning independence for the Confederacy “had come and gone.”

September 18, 1862

Though outnumbered more than two to one, Lee remained at Antietam throughout the day inviting an attack for McCellan that never came. Lee finally recrossed the Potomac with his army on the night of September 18-19.

September 25, 1825

Robert E. Lee signed the oath taken by entering cadets at West Point. “When registering, Lee gave Westmoreland County, Virginia, as his place of residence, and Colonel Henry Lee, his half-brother, as his guardian.”

September 28, 1870

Robert E. Lee suffered the stroke which led to his death on October 12. During the morning he had worked in his office at Washington College. As he completed his work, he met a sophomore who had a small picture of Lee which he wished autographed. The student offered to come back later, but Lee said, “No, I will go right back and do it now.” In the evening he braved a cold rain to preside over a vestry meeting at Grace [Episcopal] Church. Returning home, he tried to say grace at the table, but the words would not come. Doctors were summoned, and a bed was brought downstairs so that the dinning room could become a sick chamber.

Since his undiagnosed heart attack outside Fredericksburg in March 1863, Lee had suffered angina pectoris, “and his deteriorating circulatory system made him vulnerable to another heart attack or to a stroke.” In Lee’s day his attack of September 28 was diagnosed as a “venous congestion of the brain”. Today it would be called a “cerebral thrombosis, a blood clot in the brain.”

Volunteer Trip to Lexington set for September 25

This year our destination for the volunteer trip will be the Lee Chapel and Museum at Washington and Lee University and some of Lexington’s other historic attractions. Please call Delphine (703 235-1530 ext. 227) or e-mail (Delphine_Gross@nps.gov) to reserve your seat on the bus by September 12. This will be a day long trip; Lexington is approximately three hours from Arlington.

The Park Service will reimburse volunteers for their lunches (limit \$10.00 per volunteer).

Restoration of Portico Steps



Work on the portico steps is now complete. Parkway maintenance workers Jim Oldham and John Stefaniak, and YCC Michelle Harris have been working on the steps this summer. All the treads and risers have been replaced with new material. The quality of the workmanship is excellent and the steps should last for many years to come.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

As I was searching for a recipe to include in this month's newsletter, I checked Google.com for "19th century desserts". I found many interesting entries but was intrigued by the reference to *The Historic Village at Allaire*, located in Farmingdale, NJ.

As volunteers at Arlington House, you have demonstrated your interest in this historic site, and I thought your interest might also extend to this 19th century industrial community where costumed historic interpreters demonstrate skills as blacksmiths, quilters, bakers and carpenters, among others. Early nineteenth century cooking methods are demonstrated by the Food Ways Guild using authentic recipes, and historic homes of the period are open for touring. The web site for Allaire is [http:// www.allairevillage.org](http://www.allairevillage.org).

Several authentic recipes are included on the web site and I was pleased to see they included two of Martha Washington's recipes for cake and cookies, part of the collection of recipes that she gave to Nellie Custis. These seemed labor intensive and very sweet, so I decided to use a simple recipe for Buttermilk Biscuits instead. Bread was a major part of the 19th century diet. In fact, the average person consumed one pound of bread per day!

We know that soon after Mary Custis wed Robert E. Lee and moved to Fortress Monroe, she wrote home requesting a supply of George Clark's famous Maryland Beaten Biscuits be sent to her. The following recipe for Buttermilk Biscuits is much easier to make and the result is very tasty!

Dorothy Carns

Buttermilk Biscuits

2 cups all purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
6 T. vegetable shortening (like Crisco)
2/3 cup buttermilk

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt

With a pastry cutter, blend in shortening and when thoroughly mixed, add the buttermilk. Stir the mixture with a fork, then knead it quickly (about half a minute) and roll it out on a floured surface to a thickness of ¼ to ½ inch. Cut round biscuits 2 inches in diameter, place them close together on a baking sheet and bake for about 8 to 10 minutes or until golden brown and puffy.

This recipe is from the Food Ways Guild in the Historic Village at Allaire

From the Office Down the Hall (continued)

the flames from Arlington House). And when his paintings were ridiculed, he wrote plays. He was never able to breed a uniquely American sheep, but his dreams for agricultural science saw fruit for over 30 years at Arlington in the 20th century. And Custis almost single-handedly saved much of the memory, legend and legacy of Washington—he was surprisingly adept as an early preservationist.

Sometimes the courage to keep going against mounting odds may be worth more to posterity than a medal. In the 1968 Olympics, Tanzania's John Stephen Akhwari came in

dead last in the marathon, hours after everyone else had finished. Akhwari had taken a nasty fall and severely injured his knee. When asked why he kept running, he said simply, "My country did not send me 7000 miles away to start the race. They sent me 7000 miles to finish it."

I think Custis would have kept running too. He attempted a number of different challenges and, well, never really medaled—but he never quit trying either. Custis suffered a certain amount of ridicule in his life, but in some ways his is an example that many Olympians can follow, especially when

they suddenly find themselves without any hope left for gold. There are more important things than gold. After a crushing series of personal attacks in a local newspaper, Custis said, "My destiny is so interwoven with the glorious destiny of the nation...my humble services will not be forgotten." I think he might make gold in posterity...okay, maybe silver.

Kendell Thompson
Site Manager
Arlington House,
The Robert E. Lee Memorial

September 2004

Arlington House VIP Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30	2 Walter DeGroot 9:30-11:30 C. Needham 10:30-1:00	3 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30 Elene Paul 12:30-4:30	4 Jim Pearson 11:00-4:30
5 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	6 Jim Pearson 9:30-1:30 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	7 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	8 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30	9 Walter DeGroot 9:30-11:30 C. Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00	10 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30 Elene Paul 12:30-4:30	11 Kirsten Wolfe 10:00-4:30 Robyn Vai 11:00-3:00 Delia Rios 1:00-3:30
12 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	13 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00 Jo Schoolfield 10:00-2:00	14 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	15 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30	16 Walter DeGroot 9:30-11:30 C. Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00	17 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30	18 Rebecca Jones 9:30-4:30 Lisa Kittinger 11:00-4:30 Delia Rios 1:00-3:30
19 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	20 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	21 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	22 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30	23 Walter DeGroot 9:30-11:30 C. Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00	24 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30	25 Vanna Lewis 10:00-4:30 ???
26 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	27 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00 Jo Schoolfield 10:00-2:00	28 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00 Kathie Lipovac 12:30-4:30	29 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30	30 Walter DeGroot 9:30-11:30 C. Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00 Kathie Lipovac 12:30-4:30		

If you are available to volunteer, but are not on the calendar please call Delphine so you can be added to the schedule.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Arlington House
The Robert E. Lee Memorial
c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The Spectacle is a monthly newsletter for the volunteers of Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial.

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Comments? Write to:

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Volunteers Needed

The roster of active volunteers is in dire need of additional names! If you know anyone interested in joining our ranks please refer them to Delphine Gross, Volunteer Coordinator (703) 235-1530 ext 227.

